UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/941
S/1994/577
16 May 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-eighth session
Agenda item 38
ELIMINATION OF APARTHEID AND
ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNITED,
DEMOCRATIC AND NON-RACIAL
SOUTH AFRICA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-ninth year

Note verbale dated 12 May 1994 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to enclose herewith the text of the statement made by the Prime Minister of India, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Government of National Unity in South Africa on 10 May 1994 (see annex). The Permanent Representative of India requests that the statement be circulated as a document of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 38, and of the Security Council.

Annex

Statement made by the Prime Minister of India on the occasion of the inauguration of the Government of National Unity in South Africa on 10 May 1994

Today is a special day for South Africa, for the whole world and for people of India. A new Government, elected on the basis of the first ever multi-racial elections in South Africa, assumed office today, and Nelson Mandela has been elected as South Africa's first democratic President. As the people of South Africa celebrate the dawn of freedom, we join them with joy, happiness and pride for what they have achieved and for what their achievement signifies for humanity.

The South African people have succeeded in overthrowing decades of domination and exploitation based on the dark aspects of human existence; the belief that one man is superior to another because of the colour of his skin, because he can force his will on the majority. All this has been relegated to history.

The South African people have achieved what is rightfully theirs, a country that belongs to all who live in it, and a Government that they can claim as their own based on the will of the people. The South African struggle has shown that the strength of the human spirit, the strength of values of moral conviction, and the strength of uncompromising struggle against domination and exploitation are indeed formidable forces for change.

The achievements of the South African struggle are a homage to Mahatma Gandhi. It was in South Africa 101 years ago that the father of our nation saw a link between the struggles for freedom in that country and ours. Gandhiji said "truly speaking, it was after I went to South Africa that I became what I am now. My love for South Africa and my concern for her problems are no less than for India."

By history, circumstance or choice, about one million people of Indian origin now live in South Africa. Most of them have lived there for generations and have toiled with their South African compatriots, and contributed to the prosperity of that country. Many have also struggled shoulder to shoulder against the minority racist domination. Today, they are a vibrant part of the family of the South African people. We will endeavour to reinforce the closest cultural and social links with them and with the people of all races in South Africa.

We welcome post-apartheid South Africa to the comity of nations. The ties we have forged in the long years of being in the forefront of the struggle against apartheid will stand us in good stead in developing mutual cooperation. India was in the vanguard of the anti-apartheid struggle, the first to raise the issue at the United Nations, and we have done this because we felt it was our cause, and not that of a distant neighbour.

On this very happy occasion, I would like to extend our congratulations and felicitations to one of the great men of our times, the father of the South African nation, whom we honoured in 1979 with the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for the International Understanding and in 1990 with the Bharat Ratna award, President Nelson Mandela, as he takes up his responsibilities as head of State of South Africa. We pay tribute to his role as a great reconciler and wish him success in leading South Africa through the interim period towards a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future.